

**MEMORANDUM**  
**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH**  
**LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909-7979**

DATE: December 2005 - January 2006  
TO: Families of Children with Special Needs  
FROM: Mary Marin, Executive Director, Parent Participation Program (PPP)  
Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS) Division  
SUBJECT: Heart-to-Heart Information Updates

Our tenth *Relatively Speaking* conference took place last month. At the heart of it are age-appropriate "Sibshops." They are exciting support, information and recreation opportunities for young brothers and sisters of children with special needs, age six and up.

Among the evaluations, one youngster wrote: "... there are lots of people that have sibs with problems, and ...there are lots of ways to have fun with other people." Nearly every "sib" named "making friends" as one of the best things about the weekend.

"Relatively" is not our only involvement with conferences. We also provide scholarships for parents to attend a conference related to the diagnosis, care or treatment of their child's special need. Thanks to the continuing funding by the *Children with Special Needs Fund*, scholarships are available for the current budget year. For an application, parents may phone 1-800-359-3722. Conferences parents went to this year focused on Down syndrome, mitochondrial disorders, nonketotic hyperglycinaemia (NKH) and urea cycle disorders. Conference reports by parents and handouts they brought back are available by phoning 1-800-359-3722.

The New Year is only days away. Our CSHCS Family Phone Line (1-800-359-3722) will be closed Friday-Monday, Dec. 23-26, and Friday-Monday, Dec. 30-Jan. 2. Watch for our next issue in February in your mailbox or at [www.michigan.gov/cshcs](http://www.michigan.gov/cshcs). Happy Holidays!♥

## ***PPP Update***

Parents of children with special needs can get training to give peer support focused on health issues. Trained "health resource parents" will be part of Michigan's new *Family-to-Family Health Information and Education Center*.

Four **Health Resource Parent Trainings** will take place in 2006. They will cover responsibilities of a support parent, public health care coverage, strategies for effective communication with health care providers, educating youth on health care decision-making, and

making referrals. Interested parents should phone the Parent Participation Program (PPP) at 1-800-359-3722. PPP and various agency partners will do the training.

The new center will improve access to quality care and supports for children with special needs in their communities by empowering families. Through 2008, PPP is the center's coordinating partner among a host of family, community, state and national entities. The center is funded by a grant from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.♥

## ***CSHCS Update***

Families with Medicaid who qualify for medical travel related to a CSHCS diagnosis may get more reimbursement for expenses from Medicaid than from CSHCS. Medicaid reimburses at a higher mileage rate (18 cents per mile). Also, Medicaid may pay for in-state meals. CSHCS no longer offers that benefit. Medicaid's lodging reimbursement (\$41.25 per night) also is higher.

To find the best medical travel reimbursement options, Medicaid families should check with the local office of the Dept. of Human

Services (formerly Family Independence Agency or FIA).♥

Public comment is welcome through Dec. 5 on a proposed Medicaid policy that affects CSHCS clients. The proposed change involves certain diabetic supplies, heparin lock flush, normal saline pre-filled syringes, and enteral formulas. The new policy makes the supplies available only from a medical supplier.

Families who are receiving those supplies from a pharmacy should check to see if the pharmacy intends to enroll as a Medicaid Medical Supplier. If not, the family must obtain the supplies from an enrolled medical supplier.

The proposed change is part of the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Program implementation. The text is at [www.michigan.gov/mdch](http://www.michigan.gov/mdch) under *Providers*, then *Information for Medicaid Providers*, then *Proposed Medicaid Changes*. Click on *project 0533-P*. The page explains how to mail, fax or e-mail comments.♥

## Events

A **camp fair on choices for children with special needs** is set for **Jan. 12** in **Birmingham**. Contact Friends of Different Learners at 248-646-5275 or at [www.friendsodl.homestead.com](http://www.friendsodl.homestead.com).♥

Artistic, affordable and accessible children's theater is

the motto of **Wild Swan Theater**. Performances are set across Southeast Michigan through June. American Sign Language interpreting is part of all its Ann Arbor home-stage performances, often with the interpreters playing characters. For youngsters who are visually impaired, there are *Touch Tours* of costumes, props and musical instruments. They also can borrow a receiver to hear audio description of any production. Get details at [www.wildswantheater.org](http://www.wildswantheater.org) or (734) 995-0530.♥

**Michigan's Early Hearing Conference** for audiologists, interventionists and parents is set for **March 27** in Lansing. For details phone the *Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program* at (517) 335-8884 or go to [www.mphi.eductrning.net](http://www.mphi.eductrning.net).♥

## Resources

Gift shopping for children with special needs is made easier by several resources: ■ *The Toy Guide for Differently-Abled Kids* is at Toys R Us stores nationwide. Get details at [www.lekotek.org](http://www.lekotek.org) or 1-800-366-PLAY.

■ *United Cerebral Palsy's* long list of adaptive toy resources at [www.ucp.org](http://www.ucp.org).

■ *The Oppenheim Toy Portfolio 2006*, an annual book that ranks toys. It has a chapter on adapting ordinary products for kids with special needs.♥

## Dose of Humor

From jokes and humor.com

### Excerpts of Signs You've Had Too Much Coffee

Instant coffee takes too long.  
You can outlast the Energizer bunny.  
You can't even remember your second cup.  
Your eyes stay open when you sneeze.

The Parent Participation Program (PPP) is a section of the Children's Special Health Care Services Division (CSHCS) of the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH).

CSHCS is part of MDCH's Bureau of Children and Family Programs. CSHCS primarily provides medical specialty care to children with a qualifying diagnosis. PPP serves families of all children with special needs. The Family Support Network of Michigan (FSN) is PPP's parent-to-parent support arm.

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CSHCS Family Phone Line  
**1-800-359-3722**  
8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday – Friday

CSHCS and this Update online  
[www.michigan.gov/cshcs](http://www.michigan.gov/cshcs)

Free online course on CSHCS  
[www.training.mihealth.org](http://www.training.mihealth.org)

Events and Resources are compiled by PPP from a variety of sources. A listing does not denote endorsement.

If you receive multiple copies of this memo by mail, please let us know. To add your name to our postal mailing list or to remove it, *families* may call our CSHCS Family Phone Line or send e-mail to [ppp@michigan.gov](mailto:ppp@michigan.gov). Others, phone (313) 456-4381 or send e-mail to [ppp@michigan.gov](mailto:ppp@michigan.gov).